Effective Behavior Management
Strategies for the Childcare Setting

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Welcome!

- Introductions
- Meet the Instructor
- Meet the Participants
What we will cover

- Why do children misbehave?
- Components of behavior management
- Practicing behavior management
- Techniques for behavior management
- Common behavior problems
Pre-test

- Please complete this brief pre-test and return it to your instructor when you are finished.
Why do Children Misbehave?
Why Children Misbehave

- One of the most common reasons a child misbehaves is because he or she is not getting a need met.

- Can you think of some unmet needs that might cause children to behave badly?

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
4 Reasons for Misbehavior

1. Undue Attention
2. Misguided Power
3. Revenge
4. Assumed Inadequacy (giving up)

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
4 Reasons for Misbehavior

- Undue Attention-
  - Children often seek undue attention because they equate attention from adults with caring and love.

- How might you fix this problem?

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
4 Reasons for Misbehavior

- Misguided Power-
  - Children need to feel secure; like they are in control of themselves. When control is taken away, they may seek to regain power by purposefully disobeying directives.

- How might you fix this problem?

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
4 Reasons for Misbehavior

- Revenge-
  - If a child believes that he or she has been treated unfairly, revenge will likely be a result.

- How might you fix this problem?

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
4 Reasons for Misbehavior

- Assumed inadequacy-
  - This is the child that supposedly needs help with everything.

- How might you fix this problem?

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
Other Causes of Misbehavior

- Health Problems
- Poor Nutrition
- Sleep Disturbances
- Mental Delays
- Developmental Disabilities
- Stress
- Emotional Disturbances
- Poor Attachment
- Change
- Natural Skill Deficits
- Inappropriate expectations for age/developmental level
- Family dysfunction/problems

Essa, 2003
Components of Behavior Management
What is Behavior Management?

- Behavior management is “all of the actions and conscious inactions to enhance the probability people, individually and in groups, choose behaviors which are personally fulfilling, productive, and socially acceptable” (Shea & Bauer, 1987).
What is Behavior Management?

- Behavior management includes
  - Behavior modification through:
    - Discipline/Instruction
    - Rewards/Reinforcers
    - Negative Consequences
What is Behavior Modification?

- **Behavior modification** is a treatment approach, based on the principles of operant conditioning, that replaces undesirable behaviors with more desirable ones through positive or negative reinforcement.
What is Behavior Modification?

- Behavior modification includes
  - Rewards
    - Social and Tangible reinforcers
  - Negative Consequences
    - Time-out
    - Loss of rewards/reinforcers
What is Discipline?

- **Discipline** is the practice of teaching and enforcing appropriate behavior through correction and guidance.
3 Criteria for Effective Discipline

- Is it respectful?
- Is it effective long-term?
- Does it teach valuable life skills for good character?

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
What is Encouragement?

- **Encouragement** is rewarding appropriate child behaviors through words, expressions, actions, and reactions.

- A form of positive reinforcement, used as a reward/reinforcer

Nelson & Erwin, 2002; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005
3 Goals of encouragement

1. To create a sense of belonging.

2. To create a sense of capability through the development of life skills.

3. To instill a sense of social interest.

Nelson & Erwin, 2002
Practicing Behavior Management
Behavior Management

- Communicating Rules & Expectations
  - Avoid criticism and lecturing
  - Avoid yelling
  - Be respectful
  - Explain the reasoning behind the rule

Fields & Boesser, 1998; Essa, 2003
Behavior Management

- Understanding Rules & Expectations
  - Utilizing natural consequences
  - Utilizing related consequences
    - Exclusion
    - Deprivation
    - Restitution

Fields & Boesser, 1998
Behavior Management

- **Exclusion-**
  - Removing a child from the rest of the group.

- **Deprivation-**
  - Removing the source of misbehavior from the child
  - Removing a reward/reinforcer from the child.

- **Restitution-**
  - Allowing a child to make amends for his or her behavior.

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Fields & Boesser, 1998
Behavior Management

- Understanding Rules & Expectations
  - Have clear teaching goals
  - Have a clear relationship between action and consequence

Action ➔ Consequence

Fields & Boesser, 1998
Behavior Management

- What are appropriate consequences?

- Complete “Selecting Consequences” worksheet.
Behavior Management

- Consistency
  - Learning appropriate behavior takes time
  - Apply the same technique each time
  - Apply the same technique to each child

Essa, 2003
Behavior Management

- Routines
  - Control for disorganization
  - Create a sense of security and order
  - Can be teaching tools

Nelsen & Erwin, 2002
Behavior Management

- Leading by example- be a role model
  - Display positive interaction
  - Express your feelings appropriately
  - Promote acceptance and kindness
  - Take responsibility for your actions
  - Find similarities between you and the children
  - Remember- they are always watching!

Fields & Boesser, 1998
Working with Parents

- Parent-teacher communication and cooperation
  - Communicate often about everything
  - Encourage two-way communication
  - Build your relationship on trust and respect
  - Be clear about rules and expectations
  - Involve parents in the goal-making and discipline process

Nelsen & Erwin, 2002
Techniques for Managing Behaviors
Developmental Considerations

- Babies and Toddlers (0-2 years old)
  - Limited communication skills
  - Lower level reasoning
  - Benefit from redirection and reinforcement
  - Time out only for 2 year olds and above (unless there are developmental delays or disabilities)
Developmental Considerations

- Young Children (3-5 years old)
  - Can understand rules and expectations
  - Can better reason between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors
  - Benefit from behavior modification, discipline, and encouragement
  - Time out for 3-5 year olds
Dos:

- Make sure that every child knows how to receive a reward
- Make sure that rewards offered are appropriate for the behavior exemplified
- Make sure that rewards reinforce specific behaviors and not just intangible notions like “being good”
- Make sure the reward is actually rewarding to the child!

Essa, 2003; Porter, 1999
Rewards: Consequences for Appropriate Behavior

Don’ts:

- Don’t use food or candy as a reward
- Don’t substitute necessary activities for rewards (such as toileting privileges or meals/snacks)

Essa, 2003; Porter, 1999
Discussion Point: Rewards

- Post rewards (positive consequences) just like you post rules and negative consequences.

- What sorts of rewards do you use?

Essa, 2003; Porter, 1999
Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

Dos:
- Make sure that consequences are as immediate as possible
- Make sure that consequences are directly related to the inappropriate behavior
- Make sure that children understand the reason they are receiving the negative consequence
- Make sure that consequences are appropriate for the age and skill level of the child

Essa, 2003; Porter, 1999
Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

- Don’ts:
  - Don’t use unrelated/ inappropriate punishment as a consequence
  - Don’t take away necessary activities (such as a meal or entire outdoor time) as a form of consequences

Essa, 2003; Porter, 1999
Time-Out

Dos:
- Give a warning before time-out is used
- Give a clear request
- Use a normal tone of voice and be respectful
- Explain your reasoning
- Have a specific place for time-out
- Usually 1 minute per 1 year of age
- Use a timer
- Have a more secluded backup area in case of refusal

Eyberg, 1988
Time-Out

- Don’ts:
  - Don’t over-use the technique
  - Don’t use an excessive amount of time
  - Don’t forget to let the child redeem himself/herself (restitution)
  - Don’t add extra consequences on top of time-out

Eyberg, 1988
Encouragement

- Stop or prevent misbehavior through the encouragement/reinforcement of appropriate behavior.

- Encouragement should inspire the child—giving them the courage to do the right thing.

- Encouragement is more about the process than the result: praise effort, even if not successful.

Nelsen & Erwin, 2002; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005
Encouragement

Dos:
- Do be specific about the behavior you are encouraging
- Do use words, attention, and special time together to encourage

Don’ts:
- Don’t withhold encouragement from a child because he or she previously misbehaved

Nelsen & Erwin, 2002; Sigler & Aamidor, 2005
Instruction

- Children are not born knowing how to behave.

- Appropriate behaviors must be taught -
  - Through example
  - Through explanation
  - Through praise/encouragement
  - Negative consequences for inappropriate behavior

Nelsen & Erwin, 2002
Instruction

- Look at the rules and repeat them routinely.

- Give special lessons on appropriate behaviors not listed in the rules.

- Every correction is an opportunity for instruction.

Nelsen & Erwin, 2002
Discussion

- What are the behavior management techniques most often used in your facility?
- How effective have they been?

- Complete “Behavior Techniques” worksheet.
- How would you handle these scenarios?
Common Behavior Problems
Aggressive Problems

- Hitting
- Biting
- Throwing Objects
- Hurting Others

What are some likely causes?

Essa, 2003
Aggressive Problems

- What might be appropriate steps?
  - Respond immediately
  - Take care of the victim first
  - Remove the aggressor from the area
  - Make sure the aggressor is calm
  - Consider the cause
  - Explain the appropriate form of behavior (Rules)
  - Utilize a consequence
  - Allow restitution

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Szarkowitz, 2004
Antisocial Problems

- Using Inappropriate Language
- Name-Calling

What are some likely causes?

Essa, 2003
Antisocial Problems

- What might be appropriate steps?
  - Give the child a warning, cite class rules
  - Ignore the child who exhibited the bad behavior
  - Remove other children from the area, help them ignore the words too
  - Focus on another topic or activity with the other children
  - Encourage/Reinforce when the perpetrator does not use foul language/name calling
  - Only use a consequence when offense is extreme

Essa, 2003
Antisocial Problems

- Non-sharing
- What are likely causes?

- What might be appropriate steps?
  - Make the environment conducive to sharing
  - Teach sharing skills often
  - Encourage/Reinforce sharing behaviors
  - Mediate non-sharing situations: give options, do not scold, do not force

Essa, 2003
Disruptive Problems

- Disrupting Group Time
- Running Aimlessly Around the Classroom
- Shouting in the Classroom
- Dropping Objects to Create Noise

What are likely causes?

Essa, 2003
Disruptive Problems

- What might be appropriate steps?
  - Give one warning
  - Remove the child from the group
  - Explain the appropriate group time behavior (Rules)
  - Use time-out or another appropriate consequence
  - Encourage/reinforce proper group time behavior

Essa, 2003
Destructive Problems

- Tearing Books
- Breaking Toys
- Flushing Objects Down the Toilet
- Wasting Paper
- Destroying the Work of Others

What are likely causes?

Essa, 2003
Destructive Problems

- What might be appropriate steps?
  - Prevent destructive problems as much as possible through organization and vigilance
  - Encourage/Reinforce appropriate use of materials
  - Teach impulse control
  - When destruction happens, calm child first
  - Explain appropriate use of materials (Rules)
  - Use time-out or another appropriate consequence

Essa, 2003
Inappropriate Expression

- Excessive Crying
- Pouting
- Whining

- What are some likely causes?

Essa, 2003
Inappropriate Expression

- What might be appropriate steps?
  - Ignore the child who exhibited the bad behavior
  - Remove other children from the area, help them ignore the behavior too
  - Focus on another topic or activity with the other children
  - Encourage/Reinforce when the child does not cry, pout, or whine
  - Teach the child how to better express his or her needs

Essa, 2003
Things to Remember

- Every behavior has a motivation/cause- find it out!
- Use discipline to teach appropriate behaviors- not just to point out the bad ones.
- Always explain why the behavior is inappropriate and express your expectations for the appropriate behavior.
- Match the consequences with the crime.
- Allow restitution when possible.
Conclusion
Closing Remarks

- Summary
- Questions?
Post-test

- Please take this brief post-test and return it to your instructor when you are finished.
References


